

Bridget O'Keefe

From: diane@thirdsectorassociates.com
Sent: Friday, December 17, 2021 1:35 PM
To: Bridget O'Keefe
Subject: FW: Feedback on 10 Questions

[WARNING]: This email was sent from someone outside of the City of Burlington.

Please add this to the comments received. Thanks. Diane

From: Lea Terhune <leaterhune44@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, December 17, 2021 1:29 PM
To: diane@thirdsectorassociates.com
Cc: Jim Holway <jim@holway.us>
Subject: Feedback on 10 Questions

Diane,

I am submitting this to be included in the written record of testimony offered to the Ad Hoc Committee on Redistricting:

The 10 Questions survey responses submitted by Jim Holway, Ward 4 (and collated by Google) reflects what I gathered informally from residents. People are strong on 8 small wards (but no gerrymandering), strong on 2 representatives per ward, even number is fine, and definitely no at-large or district reps. I reported this to the committee during public comment, and it was shared with individual committee members in emails. I understood that committee members were receiving public input, not CEDO, so I may not have cc'd CEDO, for the record.

Several people I queried pointed out that the so-called NNE area extending along North Avenue is flexible, and can be apportioned into three ward areas with east/west boundaries. We looked at maps and noted that we could have a far north Ward 7 (both sides of the avenue), a central Ward 4 (both sides of avenue), and the southern end of the avenue could create an 8th ward naturally with adjacent neighborhoods. There would not be an 8th ward salamander of UVM students.

The problem of on-campus students being left out of city politics is a missed opportunity to bring fresh energy and ideas to a city with an aging population. Let's integrate campus students into several wards, and work with UVM to change the ivory tower syndrome. The president has sent out emails before elections, urging students to request absentee ballots from where their parents live. Some years, there is no mention of voting locally at all. The colleges and universities could offer courses that use Burlington as a research lab, challenging students to study housing issues, racism, environmental problems associated with urban development -- issues that all cities and towns face today. There are UVM studies that City doesn't even know about, like Robert Vanderbeck's paper "Vermont and the Imaginative Geographies of American Whiteness." Featured in JSTOR (2006), and published by the University of Leeds. The research was done in Burlington, on Church Street, when Vanderbeck was teaching here. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/4124437>

When I shared feedback with the committee (during public forum), I noted that at-large would be strongly resisted. It is seen as a blatant attempt to carve out seats for monied interests. Citywide campaigns are expensive and at-large reps' sponsors would be the people who finance their campaigns, among them PACs and special interests. As a result, some areas of the city would have more representation than others.

The at-large option was pushed onto the bullet list for the Committee Memo even though it scored very low on the Ward 1 FPF survey, on the public forum meti survey, on the CEDO survey, and on the 10 Questions survey! If addressed in the memo, it has to be in a category of low priotity options, along with large wards, odd number of reps, and gerrymandering.

Redistricting is out of the closet, and we intend to keep it out. No more last minute incumbent-friendly schemes pushed through by elected officials, with empty threats of the court taking over if voters don't pass something fast. Let's focus on residents, and get it right this time.

Lea Terhune